

of a project I'm thinking about where the text will fall on the page, how the art will relate to it, etc. I've worked with designers who were reluctant to provide me with set type at the layout stage of my artwork, and I found that very frustrating, to say the least, and counter-intuitive when one is working with type and pictures as closely integrated as they are in picture books. On occasion, I have even gone as far as to set the type myself, especially when it has been an important visual element to the page.

**TL:** Illustration is an act of interpretation. Was there anything about Bill's interpretation of your writing that intrigued or surprised you?

**LB:** I have been lucky that Bill's visual interpretations have generally been very close to my own imaginings. I have been surprised at times—and delighted—to see an “extra story” told only in the pictures. An example is the little “romance” that Bill created for Gassy Jack in *Stanley's Party*, in which Gassy Jack progressively courts a big-eyed, be-ribboned female dog—sharing spaghetti, doing a tango, and then unceremoniously dumping his

new girlfriend when the people come home. I have also loved what Bill has added to the dogs' characterization: Nutsy as bug-eyed, neurotic Chihuahua; Gassy Jack as vaguely unsavory bulldog; and most of all, the genial good nature and goofiness of Stanley. Once in a while, Bill and I have had different notions of some element of story, and we have had to work things out, generally through the editor, but once (because we were together in the same place) directly. However, different viewpoints are rarer than one might imagine, given that we don't ever actually talk stories through.

Fans can continue to enjoy Stanley's antics—his most recent adventure, *Stanley's Beauty Contest*, was released in the spring of 2009. ■

Linda Bailey and Bill Slavin's picture book, *Stanley at Sea* was one of the Ontario Library Association's Blue Spruce nominees for 2009.



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